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THE UTILITY OF ARDENT SPIRITS.

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AN

ADDRESS

FOR AN

ANTI-TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

7588.244

BY AMICUS JUSTITIÆ.

'I also will show mine opinion.'

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY LIGHT AND HORTON.
Samuel Harris, Printer.
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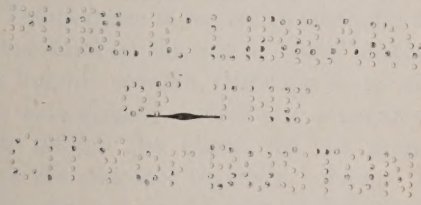

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ADDRESS.

I APPEAR before you at this time, my friends, as the advocate of a subject which, I am happy to believe, will enlist at once your sympathies and your kindest wishes. A strange delusion has of late spread itself over the minds of many of our good citizens, which leads them to suppose, that whoever now attempts to address the public on any subject relative to Temperance in regard to alcoholic liquor, must take his stand on the side of '*total abstinence.*' But, in my humble opinion, there has been enough said on this side already; while few advocates have appeared to defend the cause, for the promotion of which we are now met together. Justice therefore requires that we should look at the arguments on both sides of the question, concerning the use of and traffic in ardent spirits. There certainly must be some advantages in rum-drinking and rum-selling, or those who continue in this practice sin most egregiously against themselves and their neighbors.

It is my design, in the remarks which I shall now present, briefly to set forth some of these advantages.

Were I to appeal to the Bible, as many do on this subject, I could doubtless find ample support for my doctrine. For what doctrine is there now broached by our learned teachers and great men, that is not maintained and defended from the Bible. Witness the sublime mysteries of Mormonism, and other systems of religion more or less visionary and erroneous. I presume I may at least quote that celebrated passage from the book of Deuteronomy, with which you are doubtless familiar, as a sanction for my doctrine: 'And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after; for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth.'

I know that some learned writers tell us that the *strong drink* mentioned in this passage was a fermented liquor, and that ardent spirit was not invented until A. D. 900. But I shall take for granted that it also signifies *New England rum*, or *brandy*, or any other intoxicating liquors which our 'souls may lust after.' I suppose it will also be said, in opposition to my appropriation of this text of Scripture, that the *strong drink* of the Hebrews was prescribed for him that is 'ready to perish;'—that Aaron and his sons were forbidden to use it while they ministered at the sanctuary;—and that it is represented in other parts of the Bible as 'raging' and dangerous in its tendency. But Aaron and his sons perhaps were not so capable of *governing* them-

selves in the use of it, as people are at the present day; and therefore, though the prohibition might have been necessary for them, it is not so for us, who can drink temperately.

Some cavilling temperance men may also say, that if I take a part of the Levitical Law as a rule of conduct, I ought, for the sake of consistency, to adopt the whole. And therefore, while I quote the law as a sanction for the purchase and use of strong drink, I ought also to observe and obey the 8th verse of the same chapter, which forbids me to eat swine's flesh. In answer to this, I would say, that I did not set out to argue upon rules of consistency, but upon rules of *appetite* and *inclination;* and therefore I must be permitted to take such parts of the laws as suit my purpose, and leave the rest.

These things being premised, I proceed to offer some arguments in favor of the liberal use of strong drink, from the advantageous effects which it produces:

1. On the consumer.
2. On his family; and
3. On society at large.

In glancing at the happy influence of ardent spirits on the individual who drinks it, we may consider it as two-fold in its operation—corporal and mental.

'An agreeable heat,' says a writer on the subject, 'is diffused over the whole body; muscular strength is recruited, and the action of the heart and arteries is increased. The vigor of the circulation of the blood being thus augmented, a sparkling of the

eyes may be observed; a flash or redness is spread over the face, and the whole appearance of the countenance is brightened into a smile.' *

I hardly need remark to you, that no circumstances could be more favorable than these, for a display of one's own beauty upon the canvass. In other words, now is the time for the individual to sit for his portrait. He ought not, however, to commit the work to a dauber; for the various shades and gradations of feature that will rapidly succeed each other, as he repeats the exhilarating draught, demand the talents of a Hogarth.

But the use of ardent spirits as a beverage, not only adorns the skin with a rich crimson hue, or livid paleness, and graces the features with a variety of contortions, but it also adds a peculiar fragrance or odor to the breath; especially when combined with a liberal quantity of the juice of tobacco.

Another beneficial effect of the use of strong drink on the body of its consumer, is, that it produces regular habits.

The very sight of the 'bar room,' or the dram-shop, serves as a guide to the habit. The return of the 4th of July—the birth day of Washington—Christmas—New Year, and Election days—a military muster, and other seasons of public convocation—as also the seasons of haying, harvesting, husking, raising, &c.—remind the individual of his favorite beverage, and form his annual or periodical helps to regularity. But if he has become a real

* Trotter on Drunkenness, page 24.

amateur of the 'good critter,' he will also have his *daily* remembrancers. The morning will remind him of his bitters; eleven o'clock will tell him of the grand restorative; noon brings to his recollection the necessary preparative for a good appetite; at four P. M. he will need no time-piece to show the hour; and the meeting of friends and jovial companions in the evening, will furnish ample proof that ardent spirit possesses the happy quality which disposes the drinker, when his system is running down, to wind himself up again; and thus creates not only a regular, but also a sort of perpetual motion.

Another important advantage of alcoholic liquor on the bodies of its consumers, is, it enables them to perform as much labor and more, in one hour, than they can naturally accomplish in two. This is an equal benefit both to the laborer and his employer. The employer, for a few cents' worth of rum or brandy, obtains from his neighbor as much muscular effort in an hour, as without it, would cost him twice or thrice the time and expense. On the other hand, the laborer has the satisfaction, especially if employed by the day, of the clear gain of the spirits which he drinks, besides his wages; and obtains the credit of an 'unusually smart fellow to work,' into the bargain. Does any one ask whether straining the muscular system by stimulus at such a rate, does not tend to wear out the man prematurely, and bring him to an early grave? I reply, that it is of no great importance, because he was *made* to wear out; and he had much better wear out than rust out.

I mention as another happy effect of ardent spirits on the body of its consumer, who can breakfast, dine and sup upon it, that when he falls down, as he is sometimes liable to do, his muscles are so relaxed that he seldom receives much injury. I might adduce numerous illustrations of this; but I presume you are all familiar with the fact. There may seem to be some contradiction between this and the effect last specified. But it should be observed that I mention this effect as peculiar to those who have attained a high degree in drinking, so that they may be said to *abide* under its influence. And there is nothing contradictory in the idea, that the muscular system may be so much stimulated as to lose its elasticity. And my remark is, that to such as have attained this pre-eminence in drinking, it is no inconsiderable advantage to be able to fall flat upon a pavement, or from a precipice, and not feel it; and then to 'stick to the ground without holding on.' During that state of relaxation just mentioned, there is another corporeal advantage to the drinker of ardent spirits, which deserves notice. It enables him to resist the effects of extreme cold. The following instance related by the author already quoted, furnishes a striking illustration of this remark.

'A miller, very much intoxicated, returning from market late at night, while it snowed and froze very hard, missed his way, and fell down a steep bank into the mill-pond. By the fright and the sudden immersion, he became so far sensible as to recollect where he was. He then thought the surest way

home would be to follow the stream, which would take him within a few yards of his own door. Instead, however, of taking that course, he waded against the current, not knowing it till his passage was obstructed by a bridge. He knew the bridge, and though he felt disappointed, he still thought he had better follow the stream, the banks being steep and difficult of ascent. He now found himself in a comfortable glow; turned about, and arrived at his own house at midnight, perfectly sober, after having been nearly *two hours* in the water.'

Who would not get drunk for the sake of performing such a feat as this? I would not venture to decide *how long* an individual would continue thus to resist cold; nor whether in such circumstances, he might not fall into a snow-drift and be frozen to death or buried alive, before he awoke to his condition. I leave the decision of such problematical notions to wiser heads than mine. I would merely observe, however, what must be obvious to you all, that if he were frozen, the effect would be attributable to *cold*, not to ardent spirits. We seldom hear of *spirits* freezing, unless greatly adulterated with water.*

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* About forty years ago, during a very severe winter, a party of Indians procured a keg of New England rum, of which they partook very freely. On their return to their camp, one of their number, being overpowered by sleep, laid down by the road-side, and slept the sleep of death. Soon another imitated him, and after him another, and another, at different stages of their journey. Two only of the whole company arrived safely at their own wigwams, which they contrived to enter, not knowing exactly how or when. In the morning, missing their companions, they set out in search

Similar to this, is another advantageous effect on the hearty consumer of strong drink—he feels very little or no pain from severe wounds and bruises.

'A sailor belonging to the British navy, while drunk,' says the same author, 'quarrelled with his wife, and in the fury of his passion, seized a butcher's cleaver, and cut off two of his fingers at the roots. The wounds were dressed and the man put to bed. When he awoke in the morning he had no remembrance of what had happened, and wept for his misfortune when informed that he had done it himself.'

This advantage is strikingly apparent, in the case of those who are afflicted with diseased or fractured limbs, which require amputation. Such is the soothing, benumbing power of ardent spirits, that under its influence, the operation may be performed without any perception of pain by the patient. True, the surgeon might, through want of the evidence of sensation, cut a little too deep for the patient to survive it; there is, however, a manifest

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of them, when, to their surprise and grief, they found their lifeless bodies strewed along the highway. Whereupon they resorted to a justice of the peace in a neighboring village, to ask his counsel and advice in the case. Being advised to hold a council of inquest over the bodies, they proceeded accordingly, and without delay. After mature and solemn deliberation, the council came to the following natural and easy result: That their companions came to their death, not by excessive drinking, but by mixing too much *water* with their rum for the severity of the weather, and their extreme exposure; and that the said water *congealing* within them, caused their untimely death.—*Old Chronicle.*

advantage in being able to cut off one's fingers and toes without feeling it. Perhaps it may be said, this effect of ardent spirits upon the human body is unnatural, and arises from the intemperate use. To this I reply, that it is no more unnatural than the other effects that have been mentioned—the increased ability to labor and to endure cold. They are all unnatural, and I attribute them not to man's natural powers, but to the influence of ardent spirits. If one of these effects be called unnatural, and be adduced as evidence of *intemperance*, so may all the rest. You should be careful, my friends, who love a 'drop or two,' how you advance such arguments, lest the Temperance folks should take advantage of them. It is the true policy of the friends of strong drink, to admit no one to be intemperate, who does not get dead drunk every day.

To sum up my remarks on this part of the subject, ardent spirits as a *medicine*, (and it is generally taken as such,) surpasses every other preparation of medical skill. It is a sovereign *panacea*. Under the burning heat of summer it refreshes the system, counteracting the chilling influence of cold water, and allaying thirst at the same time. Amid the severe frosts of winter it kindly changes its operation, warming the blood, and thus promoting a comfortable glow through the whole system. When *sick*, it restores you to health; and when *well*, it makes you feel still better. It is, moreover, adapted to all diseases to which the human body is sub-

jected. And, unlike most other medicines, it excites in the patient such an attachment to it, that he is willing to take it during life. This is evident from the fact, that none who use it because they think they need it as a medicine to do them good, ever express any expectation or desire of attaining that degree of health, in which it will become unnecessary for them. They seem to esteem it a privilege to be sick, as an excuse for continuing its application. Many of them esteem it better than food or clothing; and can testify from happy experience, that when taken in a sufficient quantity, it is *lodging* too. And they consider it a far less evil that their families and themselves should suffer hunger, and almost any privation, than that they should be deprived of this wonderful catholicon. And the correctness of their judgment on this point is established by the evidently concurrent opinion of those who under such circumstances continue to furnish it to them. I am aware that the temperance societies are endeavoring to inculcate the sentiment, that the habitual use of this medicine is destroying the constitutions and wasting the property of those who are so fond of it; and that they and their families would be happier if the money were spent in food, clothing and comfortable dwellings; and on this principle, they are endeavoring to lead them to a desire to recover their health, and cease to use it. Some medical associations also have confirmed such sentiments, and have even gone so far as to assert that ardent spirits are unnecessary

as a medicine!!* and many of the common people have been persuaded to believe and act upon these opinions. But surely no *respectable* hearty rum-drinker will be influenced by them. I will state a case which occurred in one of the towns of Maine, to show you that *total abstinence* from this medicine, tends to the ruin of the individual. A woman who was a lover of a good dram, frequently repeated, was deprived by force of her favorite beverage for about two weeks; and such was her attachment to the bottle, and her displeasure under the privation, that she cut her own throat, and thus destroyed herself, declaring she would not live so any longer. Here you perceive is conclusive evidence that total abstinence destroys life. If this unfortunate woman could have had free access to a bottle or a barrel of good New England rum, or cider brandy, she *might* have lived until this day!

2. Let us turn our attention for a few moments to some of the peculiarly advantageous effects of strong drink on the *mind* of its consumer. Shakspeare has indeed said concerning ardent spirits—'Oh that men should put an enemy into their

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* Seventy-five physicians, in the city of Boston, have signed a certificate, giving it as their united opinion, that 'ardent spirit does no good to persons in health, *in any circumstances.*' Dr. John C. Warren, the president of the Medical Society of Massachusetts, declared in public debate, before the Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance, 'that the instances were very rare in which ardent spirits did any good in cases of *sickness*, and it did injury a hundred times where it did good once—and he hoped the time would soon come when medical men would cease to prescribe it altogether.'

mouths, to *steal away* their brains!'* This sentiment, coming from so great a man, 'the prince of poets,' is at variance, I am aware, with that contained in the proposition now before us. And I know no better way to obviate the difficulty, than by referring to Milton, another great man and a poet, as an offset. He wrote an ode in praise of *wine;* a large proportion of which, at the present day, is considered as very little weaker than brandy. I may, therefore, venture to say something respecting the known advantages of strong drink on the minds of its consumers. Indeed, there is so much wisdom displayed in its invention, that we might naturally expect to witness the fruits of wisdom in its subsequent operations. It appears somewhat surprising, seeing its peculiarly happy effects, some of which I have mentioned, that it should have remained undiscovered, until A. D. 900. Indeed, we are almost disposed to wonder, that instead of being left so many centuries, for the exercise of the wisdom of an Arabian chemist, it did not form one of the works of the Creator, when he saw all things that he had made and pronounced them very good. However, we know that he created the *principle* of many things, and left it for the wisdom and ingenuity of man to invent its various modifications. For example, the Creator formed the ore, sulphur and nitre; but he left to the wisdom of man, the happy invention of transforming them into implements for the destruction of his species. So also

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* Othello.

the Creator formed alcohol, (an Arabian word which denotes the spirituous principle,) and distributed it through the grain, the sugar, the fruit, and various vegetable productions. This arrangement he pronounced very good for the nourishment and sustenance of man. But not having provided for those happy effects on the body and mind, which we are contemplating, he left ample scope for that display of human wisdom, by which the alcohol or spirit has been separated from the nutritious substances, and made an article of drink, and of traffic. So that, notwithstanding it is the invention of man, we call it 'one of the good things of God's providence,' just as we call *henbane*, *tobacco*, *arsenic*, *powder* and *shot*, and even *sin* itself. For nothing, we are taught, exists without his permission. But, as was remarked, from such an exhibition of human wisdom as is exhibited in this happy discovery, we may expect to witness corresponding *mental* effects on those who may avail themselves of its benefits. I will merely mention some of those peculiar mental advantages, which in a greater or less degree pertain to all the lovers of ardent spirits.

1. It drowns care. To illustrate this I might appeal to numerous instances, in which *husbands* who had been reduced to poverty through various causes, seemed to care nothing what they or their families should eat or drink, or wherewithal they should be clothed, merely from taking frequent hearty sips of rum, brandy or whiskey. Some of them had wives and children dangerously ill; and

in more than one instance, the mother or a child lay dead in the house. Such circumstances I need not say, were prolific sources of grief and anxiety to a husband and father, yet in these instances he was perfectly insensible to it all, having wisely and largely partaken of this sovereign balm for all care. I have known instances too, in which the same happy effect was produced by it on the mind of the mother; particularly one in which the mother with an infant at the breast, and filled with anxiety concerning its future support, found entire relief from all her burden of care and sorrow, under the soothing influence of brandy. I regret to say, that while in this state of happy insensibility, she fell upon her infant, and suffocated it; but she certainly enjoyed the advantage, for the time at least, of freedom from all her anxiety and care. It may be said as before, that this was an unnatural effect, and was produced by intemperance. But, I ask, in reply, what could the poor woman do? Of three evils she chose the least. For she must either have spent all her money to supply herself and infant with food and clothing, and have relinquished entirely the use of ardent spirits; or she must have limited herself to a smaller quantity during the day; or she must take enough at once to drown her care. The first alternative, you perceive, she could not choose consistently, for it would be adopting and practising total abstinence—the very principle of that system of priestcraft, the temperance society; and this, you know, we must avoid at all hazards. The second,

would have still left her the prey of corroding anguish. And, therefore, she very wisely adopted the last course. You cannot, my friends, be too often cautioned against the abominable doctrine of entire abstinence. You know that 'a little is good in its place;' and common sense teaches us that every one must judge for himself what its *place* is, and of how much the *little* should consist. This prerogative of judging for herself, the woman whose case has been mentioned exercised. We cannot harbor the thought that she would have approved of *intemperance.*

Another mental advantage of the use of strong drink, is, that it produces a feeling of wealth and independence, and often benevolence. You are aware that if a person can only *feel* that he is rich, though he be never so poor, he enjoys all the pleasure of having riches, without any of the care and anxiety connected with their real possession. I have known individuals, who, though they did not possess property to the value of ten dollars, when they had partaken freely of ardent spirits, were always ready, without any application, to lend their hundreds and their thousands. They seemed to enjoy all the pleasures of benevolence and liberality, in common with that numerous class of mankind, who wish well to objects of charity and christian philanthropy. The individuals to whom I have referred, however, would, had it been in their power, have reduced their benevolence to practice, and given their money away cheerfully and liber-

ally.* But ardent spirit not only inspires the mind of its consumer with independence and generosity, but with courage also. Mr. Trotter, a writer already quoted, informs us that he 'knew a drunken man to whip a post till he was tired, which he took for a human being that would not move out of his way.' Now this man must have enjoyed all the satisfaction which a triumphant victory over a powerful antagonist could afford, and arising from the proofs of his superior strength and courage.

I mention as another happy effect of strong drink on the drinker's mind, that it produces sociability, and often eloquence of speech. How great soever may be the natural reservedness of the individuals when not under its influence, it soon renders them averse to silence and secresy. If they then under-

* As an illustration of this advantageous effect of strong drink, (the production of feelings of benevolence,) take the following:—'On the arrival of the United States ship Concord at Portsmouth, N. H., about the beginning of the year 1833, after the payment and discharge of her crew, a sailor, who had received the whole amount of his wages, (about $200,) was urged to deposit it in the Savings Bank for his future benefit. On his way thither, having previously supplied himself with the true exciting cause, he felt the glow of benevolence so intensely, that, for want of a better object, he was compelled to lavish his generosity on a *cow*, which he happened to meet on his way. Having procured a quantity of potatoes for the animal, he began to reflect and soliloquize upon the contrast between his riches and her poverty. Deeply impressed with the consideration of her indigence, he soon mingled with her mess of potatoes *two ten dollar bills*, declaring she should not suffer while he could prevent it. The bills and potatoes were swallowed together, and another *ten dollars* was in readiness to succeed them, when the flow of his benevolence was interrupted by the spectators, and the money directed into some other channel.'—*Portsmouth paper.*

take to tell you the truth, you may be sure they will tell the whole truth. Hence the old maxim, 'There is truth in wine.' I do not say they will tell nothing but the truth;—they will tell the whole truth, and perhaps more. If then, in common life, you would like to know from your companions the secrets of their profession, trade, families, intrigues, chicanery and roguery, it is surely an advantage to know, that a few glasses of ardent spirits will bring the whole to light. On the subject of its producing eloquence, it may suffice to refer you to many of our town meetings and political caucuses, for illustrations.

Another mental advantage from the use of strong drink, which you will readily perceive, is, that it raises the drinker above, or sinks him beneath (just which you please) the influence of public opinion. He is under no restraint from a regard to reputation and public favor. He feels himself on a level with the highest and the lowest in society. His tattered garments are as comfortable to him (except in cold weather) as the robes of royalty; and when under the full influence of the ennobling power of rum, he can feel as independent in a mud-puddle as on a throne.

But time forbids me to dwell longer on this fruitful branch of the subject, and I proceed to notice,

2. Some of the advantages which arise from the use of strong drink, to the *family* of its consumer. I have already had occasion to allude to these in one particular, and shall not dwell upon this topic. From the advantageous effects which we have seen

ardent spirits produce upon the drinker himself, who can doubt whether his family, if he has one, will share in its happy influence?

One of the advantages which they derive from its consumption by their husband and father is, they are rendered the more active and industrious, by being obliged to take upon themselves the burden of their maintenance. It must be obvious, that when the head of a family takes upon himself this burden, it naturally tends to render the family helpless, and indifferent to their support in a proportionate degree, especially if they are placed in affluent circumstances. But when the master of the house becomes devoted to the luxury of the bottle, and thus drowns all care on this subject, the wife and children must be active, if they would keep themselves supplied with the superfluities, and even with the necessaries of life. They have, too, an additional object of care, and incentive to industry and action, in the gentleman himself; who, in enjoying the advantageous effects of alcoholic liquor, drowns all care about himself, as well as his family. This family advantage of the use of ardent spirits is the more apparent, when the family have been entirely dependent on their husband and father, or possess a bare competency; and such instances are the most numerous.

Again; in the middle and lower classes of society, there is another family advantage from the use of strong drink, closely allied to that just stated: that is, they are rendered hardy and robust by exposure. Not having the means of supplying their wants at

pleasure, with ease and convenience, they are compelled to manage as they can. And often, from a deficiency in proper knowledge and judgment, they are subjected to more trouble and hardship than they would otherwise be. Thus, for example, being frequently exposed to the severity of winter without sufficient clothing and fuel, and to the heat of summer from the necessity of laboring for their subsistence, they become quite inured to hardship, and can endure fatigue and exhaustion, under which those tender females and children who have no such exposures, would die inevitably.

Connected with this, is another advantage attending the habitual use of ardent spirits, to the *family* of the drinker, viz., it promotes frugality in their expenses.

Strong drink being a *cash* article, it usually requires all and more than all the ready money of its consumer, to keep himself supplied. His family, therefore, are compelled to limit their expenses to the avails of their own labor and industry. And as these are not usually very large, especially when they have not been accustomed to labor, it is obvious that they must learn to live quite frugally. Indeed they can generally testify from experience, that

> 'Man needs but little here below,
> Nor needs that little long.'

Another similar advantage is, the family are prevented from running in debt.

As an illustration of this, I will mention an instance, as related to me by a clergyman who

resided in the village where it occurred. A retailer of ardent spirits received an application from the wife of a man whom he was in the habit of supplying daily with large draughts of New England rum on credit, for some flour, sugar, and other necessary articles for the family, which she wished to obtain on her husband's account. The retailer replied that 'he could not supply her with those articles on the credit of her husband, as he should never get his pay for them, but if she would bring the money, he would be happy to furnish her.' Thus you perceive, the poor woman was prevented from incurring a debt which she had no means of discharging, and the family restrained from a luxurious indulgence in flour and sugar; and all through the influence of New England rum. When asked by a by-stander why he could not trust the man for *flour* and such articles, as well as for ardent spirits, the retailer in true character replied, 'that he knew the man would not exert himself to pay for such things, but that he would sell his own clothes and his wife's also, rather than not have rum; and this was his security for the rum bill.' Who but a stoic, will not admire the spirit of pure benevolence which shines so brightly in this act of the retailer, and in the motive which governed him, thus preventing the poor woman from running her husband in debt, while he furnished *him* so liberally with that grand promoter of domestic bliss, New England rum, on such easy security? Is it not to be regretted, in view of so lovely an example, that such retailers are not more numerous in our land!

I mention as another family advantage from the use of intoxicating drink, that the drinker's family obtains a surer title to the charity of their neighbors, than they would otherwise possess. This is clear gain. Articles of food and raiment, and supplies of fuel, coming in without any labor or expense, is certainly an advantage which all families do not enjoy. And it must be peculiarly gratifying to the feelings of the drinker, to see with how much freedom from care and attention to the supplies of his family, he can continue to quaff his favorite beverage; and how much more conscientiously and liberally he can meet the expenses of the indulgence, seeing his family are not left to suffer on account of it.

I shall specify but one more of the many advantageous effects of ardent spirits on the family of the consumer; and that is, his death does not produce that deep sorrow and anguish of spirit, which it would otherwise occasion.

The removal, by death, of the husband and father of a family, when they have long been accustomed to look not in vain to him for the means of their earthly happiness, is, as you all know, a cause of the deepest regret and lamentation. From most, if not all, this pressure of sorrow, the family of the hearty lover of strong drink is exempted; an advantage which must be obvious to all, and needs no comment.

I would merely remark, that these family benefits must be greatly augmented, when the wife and children also become devoted to that which so effectually produces them.

3. I proceed, as was proposed, very briefly to notice some of the advantageous effects of the consumption of ardent spirits on society at large. And we have only to suppose the effects already mentioned, to become universal, or to be extended over a majority of the families in the town, state or nation, to convince us that in this respect the advantages must be very great. Imagine the majority of families to be dependent on the mothers and children. Contemplate them as the sole guardians and supporters of domestic concerns, and placed with this trust in the circumstances which have been described, and you cannot fail to notice the beneficial influence of the use of and traffic in ardent spirits on society at large. Think what a field of benevolence would then be opened for the minority to *aid* such mothers and their children, especially as they become widows and orphans. And how emphatically would the divine declaration then be fulfilled, 'The poor ye have *always* with you.'

As I mentioned widows and orphans, it may remind some of the statement which has so often been made in the temperance publications, that about thirty thousand of our fellow countrymen annually die by using ardent spirits. As this seems to be a matter of actual calculation from known data, I shall not pretend to deny it; nor is it necessary, as it affords us a most happy illustration of the public advantages of the use of strong drink, in effectually preventing the evils of an excess of population.

It has also been estimated by temperance writers, that the importation, manufacture and consumption of ardent spirits in our country, is attended with an annual expense to the nation of thirty or forty millions of dollars. Here you perceive we have another public advantage. Should this expense be stopped, how rapidly would our national wealth be increased, and consequently our public morals jeopardized by a proportionate increase of luxury and dissipation! But now the annual consumption of fifty to sixty millions of gallons domestic and imported, promotes industry among our *farmers* in raising the grain and fruit; and among our distillers who metamorphose it; gives life to commerce in the importation of molasses for distillation; employs our coopers, glass blowers, and jug makers, whose trades are connected with the traffic; and pays into the national treasury a heavy duty, which you know must, of course, lessen our taxes. And, in addition, it causes a great saving of expense to the country in the article of *food.* It is generally admitted by physicians and others who have inculcated total abstinence, that the use of ardent spirits has a direct tendency to diminish the natural appetite for food. And it is well known, that many of those who abstain entirely from it, or in other words, the 'cold water folks,' require the most solid food, and a good deal of it. There is nothing saved on the score of appetite by 'cold water societies,' you may be assured. If you wish to save to your country at least half the expenditure for *provisions*, your wisest course is to favor that which tends to destroy an

appetite for it; to spend more liberally for ardent spirits,—which I need not repeat, possess this power in a remarkable degree.

It has also been asserted by temperance writers, that its use is the cause of the largest proportion of diseases which destroy health and life, and of a large majority of the crimes which occupy the attention of our courts of justice. But only consider the advantages connected with these effects. Think how many poor physicians and lawyers are thus furnished with business, who might otherwise be obliged to relinquish their professions. Besides, we have judges appointed for our courts, and we have penitentiaries, jails, alms-houses, and insane asylums already instituted, and men appointed to superintend them, all receiving a large support from the public treasury. Now I ask, shall this expense be thrown away, by leaving these men with little or no business to occupy their attention? How much better to keep these institutions well supplied, and our courts of justice well occupied, that we may not be supporting men as mere drones in society. And what tends more effectually to keep all these civil institutions in active operation, than the constant and hearty consumption of strong drink, temperance men themselves being judges? I will add but a word or two on the subject of national liberty, as the advocates of total abstinence have said so much about the tendency of the use of ardent spirits to destroy it. They tell us that six-sevenths of the pauperism of our country has been produced, directly or indirectly, by the use of strong drink,

and that it is daily increasing by the same means; that consequently the poor tax is also increased, as by the laws of the states, the poor must have a home until the nation becomes bankrupt. They say further, that should the pauperism thus produced continue to increase a few years longer, the poor tax will exceed the income of the majority of our citizens, especially our farmers, and that, therefore, they will ultimately be compelled, as in England, to abandon their property to the state. They tell us also, that the use of strong drink is rapidly corrupting the mass of our laboring classes, who form a majority of the voters in the nation, and that when these become corrupt, 'ambition needs no better implements with which to dig the grave of our liberties, and entomb our glory; that these are the troops of some future Cæsar, by whose perverted suffrages our elections may be swayed, and ultimately our liberties destroyed.' Such is the language of one of the ablest advocates for total abstinence from strong drink. But there is a single argument by which the fallacy of such reasoning can be exposed at once, to the satisfaction of every hearty friend of spirituous liquor; and that is, 'I do n't believe a word of it.' And this argument is strengthened by the striking fact, that there have been and still are, individuals of fifty, sixty or seventy years of age, who have used strong drink nearly all their lifetime, and are not paupers. But not only is the force of such reasoning thus easily annihilated, it gives us also a clue to another public advantage, from drinking ardent spirits. It

is argued, you perceive, that the poor tax is thereby increased, and the property of the rich is pledged to pay it. And surely this is comfortable doctrine for those of us who have little or no property to take care of! We are sure of a home at all events, and the habitual use of strong drink is the way to gain a title to it! Who would not drink, to gain such a privilege? And when the majority have gained this title, we can live at our ease, free from care, supported by the minority according to law! Will it be said, that before that time arrives, the government will be changed, and the poor kept in subjection by the bayonet? I know this is a part of the argument, but it is only a bug-bear so long as our constitution exists, and you know nothing can ever destroy that.

Thus I have endeavored to set forth and vindicate some of the advantageous effects of a continued use of ardent spirits on individuals, on their families, and the nation. I am conscious that I have been opposing the views of many of our most respectable and influential citizens; but I must rest the merits of my cause on the arguments which I have brought forward in support of it. If on a careful retrospect of what has now been advanced, there are any who are still unconvinced, and deem the arguments insufficient to justify the continued use of strong drink, and the traffic in it, (for they both stand or fall together,) I must consign all such to the ranks of the Temperance Society when they shall have signed its constitution. But to such as in any degree have had their attachment to the

droppings of the distillery strengthened by the course of reasoning we have pursued, I would suggest two or three important resolutions, which I may reasonably and confidently expect them to adopt, in the practical improvement of this subject.

1. You will naturally resolve, to continue to drink ardent spirits, and to furnish it to your families. In view of its great advantages on society at large, as well as on yourselves and families, what greater benefit could you confer upon them, or if taken away, bequeath to them, than to supply them plentifully with rum or brandy, or some other spirituous liquor; at least, until they took too much, if there be such a thing as taking too much of so excellent an article! You have examples from the Bible for such a liberal use of it, in the practice of some celebrated teachers of antiquity:—'Come ye,' they said, 'and we will fill ourselves with strong drink, and to-morrow shall be as this day and much more abundant.' (Isaiah, lvi. 12.)

2. Another resolution which I expect every hearty friend of ardent spirits to form and execute, in view of what has been advanced, is, that he or she will use every effort to put down these temperance societies, whose progress tends directly to destroy all these advantageous effects of alcohol. Wherever they prevail, the noble art of distilling languishes, men become mere sober, busy folks, and can hardly find a day to spend in carousing. Lawyers, justices, sheriffs and jailers, have to live in comparative idleness; physicians have not half their usual employment; there is scarcely any poor tax

to stimulate people to benevolence; and raisings, huskings, haying and harvest, become seasons of mere labor, without any fun or accident. Sunday, too, becomes a day when a person cannot walk or ride out for pleasure, nor attend to business of any kind, nor even be absent from church without being noticed and remarked upon by almost the whole community. And what is by no means the least among the evils, office-seekers are obliged to obtain the good opinion of their fellow citizens, with regard to their qualifications, before they can obtain their votes, when, had it not been for 'temperance,' they might purchase them for a song, or a gill of whiskey! And already, my friends, have these societies, which are producing such direful evils, multiplied to hundreds and thousands in our country; and unless they are counteracted and put down, there is reason to fear that they will be the means of closing our distilleries, and depopulating our dram-shops—a result, surely, which every lover of stimulating drink will sincerely deprecate, and strive to avert. And you have yet to encourage you in your efforts, the example of a goodly number of ministers, lawyers, justices, doctors, deacons, legislators, congress-men, and some, perhaps, who are or have been greater than they. Illustrious band! may some Leonidas arise to lead you on in your noble struggle against the hosts of temperance! Your cause is the cause of ALCOHOL—a glorious cause! The rights of your stomachs are threatened and invaded; let your watchword be, '*strong drink, or death.*' And should the latter be

your unhappy fate, may history record your valor and your patriotism, as it does that of your predecessors of Thermopylæ, but without even one to escape, to bear the reproach of a deserter.

3. Another resolution which I may rationally expect every friend of strong drink will form and practice, especially every spirit-drinking professor of religion, is, that he will fervently pray against these societies, and for a blessing upon ardent spirits in all the various forms in which it abounds, whether in cordials, bitters, toddy, punch, flip, grog, juleps, slings, or in what shape soever it may be presented to the stomach, that the private and public advantages, some of which have now been specified, may overspread our country, and put the finishing touch to our liberties and independence.

Perhaps I speak in the hearing of some, who, though they are the professed friends of good spirituous liquor, yet use it in so small quantities that they have experienced few, if any of the happy effects which have been described; and they may be ready to conclude that the subject does not apply to them. To such I would say, in closing my remarks, you need not be discouraged, as though you were of no use in promoting the cause of intoxicating drink. No: you are most important auxiliaries in its advancement, and in the encouragement of those who enter more heartily into its real merits. You form their supreme court of appeal, whenever the utility of the cause is called in question by the Temperance Society. The true lovers of the bottle feel proud of your influence;

they hail you as their honored leaders—drink an additional glass to your memory; they love to point their reeling companions to the mansions of their patrons; and as often as they fall down, rise up again and bless you, saying—'There is one who will have nothing to do with your cold water societies;' or, as one of them said to a deacon of the church in a certain town of Connecticut, clapping him on the shoulder in the presence of several by-standers—'They do n't get you and me on the Temperance Society, do they, deacon?' Oh, honor past conception! past all thought!!